

A Guide to the Richmond (Va.) School Commissioners Records, 1812-1860

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History

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Descriptive Summary

Barcode numbers

0007831298

Language

English

Collector

Richmond (Va.) Circuit Court

Physical Characteristics

1 box

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These items came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from the City of Richmond.

Preferred Citation

Richmond (Va.) School Commissioners Records, 1812-1860. Local government records collection, Richmond (City) Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Additional court records for City of Richmond can be found on microfilm at the Library of Virginia. Consult ["A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm."](#)

Historical Information

On February 21, 1818, the Virginia legislature passed a school bill that appropriated \$45,000 annually from the Literary Fund for the education of poor children. (The Literary Fund had been established in 1810 with passage of a bill to appropriate "certain escheats, confiscated, and forfeited lands" for the "encouragement of learning.") Under the provisions of the 1818 School Act, each county court was required to appoint five to fifteen commissioners to establish and/or administer schools for children of the poor. A more comprehensive public school system was established by the legislature in 1870. Prior to 1818, county courts were given the option of whether to appoint a Board of School Commissioners.

Richmond, located between Henrico and Chesterfield Counties, was named by William Byrd (1674-1744), who envisioned the development of a city at the falls of the James River and with the help of William Mayo laid out the town in 1737. The name probably came from the English borough of Richmond upon Thames, which Byrd visited on several occasions. Richmond was established in 1742 and in 1779 was designated the capital of Virginia effective 30 April 1780. It was incorporated as a town, although "stiled the city of Richmond," in 1782 and was incorporated as a city in 1842.

Scope and Content

Richmond (Va) School Commissioners Records, 1812-1860, consist primarily of annual reports to the Virginia Literary Fund documenting the disbursement of money from the Literary Fund to schools in the city, primarily the Lancastrian School, the Female Human Association, the Male Orphan Society, and the Free Schools at Clay Street Chapel, Tredegar, Monroe Ward, and Madison Ward. These annual reports contain board of the school commissioners minutes, reports and accounts by the school superintendent, and treasurer's records (bonds and accounts) which document the annual appropriations and operations estimates for each school. Estimates include the number of children in regular attendance, number of days of attendance for all children, tuition per student, total tuition claims, and the total paid by the school superintendent.

Other records include correspondence in relation to the 1818 School Act, a list of the names and ages of children attending the Free School held in the Richmond poorhouse in 1812, records relating to an 1814 Hustings Court suit of the Female Human Association vs John Z. Mauzey and wife, and records of school district divisions and commissioner appointments from 1847 to 1852.

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

